Interviewee:	**LMP-S12**	**English**
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MJ: So, 'Apazote'?

S12: Well it is called different ways, 'apazote', 'pazote' or 'epazote' depending on the region and it's a very good herb for stomach aches and in teas for problems of the stomach and for also it's a very good condiment especially when cooking meat, so it transfers it's properties to the meat, for flatulence and for people who suffer from that it's very good, 'epazote', it has also ritual properties, you can take baths with them and also you can do cleansings and stuff like that, so it's a very common herb in the houses of healers and spiritists.

MJ: What part of the plant is used?

S12: The whole plant, it's very invasive it's got like this ?? of seeds and so you plant one and in the next year you have 'apazote' all over the place, because it's flying, it's a bush and it's tall, very aromatic, very pungent.

MJ: to use it for a bath what part of the plant…?

S12: You use the whole thing, you can boil it, leaves, stalk, flowers and all

MJ: Not roots?

S12: Not roots, no, and you can just cut it and cut the branches for the cleansing of people and places as well, of ritual processes and that's basically it, but as a tea you take the leaves, the leaves are the ones you use, you use 'Rue', it's ?? calls the male 'rue' I wonder what he calls the male 'rue' but "Ruda" (rue) is really good for female problems, for ??tches, my mother used to use it to clean the womb, it's a very powerful herb it can cause abortion, it's not recommended for pregnant women to take it because it forces delayed menses a delayed period, it forces the menstrual period out and because of that women are not supposed to take it.

MJ: that would be taking it as a tea?

S12: yeah, only the leaves

MJ: And it's used as ?? how is it prepared?

S12: you boil it and do what they call 'banyo de asiento' (seating bath) which is you put a tub and then they will sit on that warm water to the waist, and that will be part of it.

MJ: They don't introduce it into the vagina?

S12: Not really, just whatever gets in that's about it, but it's supposed to be taken…it's a warm douche that they take, it's called 'banyo de asiento' or seating bath, you take the

tub or someplace the woman can fit and she sits there to the level of the waist and that's how you do it.

MJ: Is there a difference between using male and female 'Rue'?

S12: I wasn't aware that there was a female or male rue, I only know rue, it's the first time I see, maybe it's two varieties and they are male and female, but in my experience in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean I never heard of male rue. It's good also for stomach problems, especially for 'Empacho' (indigestion) when something gets stuck to the walls of the stomach and creates a lack of appetite and nausea and vomiting, you take a tea of that also and it expels whatever is stuck to the walls of the stomach, and lemon I know is very good for throat, we use it for throat, boiled for throat aches, colds, chest colds, the leaves are also used for the same purposes but they are milder, when you want to give a full dosage then you have, then we use the leaf, the new growth. Normally when people boil leaves you use the new growth, the very tender leaves which are supposed to be more potent so at the same time it helps to preserve the plant because if you just cut he whole thing, you never yank it from the root you just have to leave the root so next time you can find the plant again, so you don't kill it, so if you are going to use this plant these are the leaves I'd go for, this very tender part but if I was going to use the whole branch then I would go all the way through here but I would use all this, but the root which is back here is let untouched, unless a particular plant…I might need the root.

So basically that's what you use, sometimes you can use the dry leaves like these here from the plant, you know you can get them, that normally are considered like a waste, in some plants you can mix it with certain incense or burn it to release the aroma and burn it as incense, so ?? leaves if you…caution and that aroma is basically what you want to release in the house, nothing goes to waste in the plant kingdom, when you deal with plants everything is of some kind of use you don't really, just because the leaf is dry, of course dry leaves are good for that but you can, if you need to boil them for tea is OK but these dry leaves have almost nothing, if I use one leaf from this plant for a tea I might need about twenty of these dry ones just to make one of the green one, you avoid the dry ones, unless you have dry them for that purpose and you dry them upside down to keep the oils in, and then you re-hydrate them, that's different but, when they dry like this from the plant, they have almost nothing there, so the new growth is what you go for, it's a very potent concentration of everything the plant has to offer of course sometimes in the case of lemon, you go for the fruit, in the case of lemon you have the fruit, the flower, the blossom, the new leaves and basically the whole, everything the tree has to offer is used

MJ: What do you use the blossoms for?

S12: Orange blossoms is good to sooth the nerves, orange or citrus blossoms, people normally go for orange blossoms which is the most traditional one, but he blossoms of the citric trees are very soothing.

MJ: you use fresh or dried?

S12: Well you use both, well again, if you are lucky enough to need it during boiling time like here I have four citric trees, in January and February these trees are just white with

flowers but if you do not have that luxury 24 hours a day 7 days a week then you just collect them and you put them in the dark and that's what you boil, they retain very good oils, but orange blossoms you can buy it, for example 'Yerbas de Mexico' you can get a big container for 2 dollars and if you don't want to boil it you don't have to do it you go to the pharmacy and get orange blossom tea, or water that is prepared, but again like mother used to say, you should keep your stuff in your garden because you don't know who prepared that in a factory, so you don't know what hands did that and who was in a good spiritual point, you don't know, she didn't trust to much of that factory stuff, industrial stuff, she don't go there if she could avoid it, but if she had to she would do it, one of the things you have is that it already has been done for you so why bother, like the Aloe Vera, it tastes bad but if you can get it 99% pure and you don't have the plant and you don't want to go find the leaf you just go the health food store and get it, so "Barba de Elote" or "Pelo de Elote" or the corn silk is boiled and given for colics for babies and people I know take it for any type of colic, they just boil it, the taste is very gentle

MJ: Fresh?

S12: You have to get it fresh, it's very hard to…the dry one you might need so much amount, but most of the time you have to get it from purveyors like 'Yerba de Mexico' or Botanicas or 'Tadin', you have to wonder if this ?? will pick fresh, I trust 'Yerbas de Mexico' they are good, very good, but sometimes you have to wonder if they were fresh to begin with or they just got them dry and the sun does a number on these things that's why if you look at this garden you are going to see certain things growing in the shadow and certain things growing in the sun and you know the shadow is very important because you don't want the sun hitting certain things directly because it can get, ?? fresh from the leaf and you just don't get it right and of course everyone knows that the best time to pick herbs is before the sun hits them, when they are very fresh in the morning when they are revived from resting, that's the best time, I don't like to cut herbs in the afternoon because they are weak and you are getting a depleted leaf or whatever, so if I have to I will but I don't like it, not many people will cut herbs, unless they grow in the shadow, if they grow in the shadow then the sun hasn't touched…and you can tell, I mean, by touch, you go to the leaf and it springs back and it's fresh and very much alive, in the afternoon they tend to wilt a little bit and they are really weak and that's what you want to look for, OK.

MJ: Now when you prepare these teas like the one from Corn Silk and administer it, typically how many times do you have to administer it?

S12: The problem with tea is that you have to drink a lot of them, because you have to flood the body, you have to saturate the body, it's not something that is…is…unless it's a localized thing, but you have to saturate the body, it's not like medicine that you take a lot, a whole blast and that's it, you know have to really saturate the body, so you have to take it three four days a week or whatever sometimes a month to start seeing something, the advantage of teas is that they do not interact negatively with anything else, so, with teas is just a problem because in that sense you have to be patient, you have to wait until the body is completely saturated and then you have to keep that saturation level high for the tea to work, so you can take it, for example, 2 or 3 times a day before meals so that way there is nothing to interfere with the efficacy of the tea, because if you take it with milk then there is digestion and all…

So sometimes I tell people to take it in the morning or before going to bed when they are not going to eat anything else, that way that's the only thing in the stomach and sometimes you really have to do it 3 times a day and drink it like 'common water' (agua comun) every time you are thirsty you take a glass of that, so it depends on the condition, it depends how fast you want to saturate the body, if you need it like real fast you have to just give it, give it, give it, give it, until the body just get saturated with it, it depends, you can do infusions, which means you boil the water and pour it over the herb and then let it steep for one minute or two and then you take the herb out and whatever you got out, that's what you are going to drink, sometimes you boil it and you have to boil it covered, once you cover it and you boil it and very slow fire then you keep it covered and then when, let's say 5 minutes or 10 minutes, then you leave it covered when you turn the fire off and you let it sit for 10 to 15 minutes before uncovering and then that condensation you put it back into…because the very moment you boiling something, people have the very bad habit of boiling something covered and uncovering it and that vapor that just rises, there goes your medicine, so you cant open it, you have to make sure that your herbs you cover, low flames, you check it out, let it rest and when it's cool to the touch, that's when you open because the very moment it's boiling high, that vapor that goes up, that's the medicine, so what you are left is half of the strength and probably not even that, so you don't open it, the condensation that is there that's what put back into the tea, sometimes I remember, people in Puerto Rico they will tell the person to boil a plant and then take that condensation and put it in a glass and that's what they will drink and forget about that, just take that condensation, so it depends on the style of the person on what is it that you want to get there, you know what I mean?

MJ: When would we use an infusion rather than a tea?

S12: You know, I hardly use infusions because I…I use infusions when the herb is really strong and if you take a long distillation of the herb you are going to have to dilute it, because it's very strong, 'Rue' for example, so it's easy for you to boil water, dump it, have ??, take it out and drink that, for me it's a way of controlling strength, you know, because sometimes it is the strength of the plant that really makes it bitter and bad tasting or to strong to begin with and you don't want the remedy to be worse than the condition, so you know that happened with this plant here, "Poleo" (pennyroyal) this plant, that we talked about long time ago, is a very…it's a Caribbean plant it's a tropical plant and this plant is good for indigestion and it smells absolutely powerful and it's very strong, so that type of plant mixed with 'Rue' and salt not sugar, salt, you have to drink it you cant boil that yet, you have to infuse it because it's bad enough as it is but it will get rid of anything and it will balance your stomach.

That was the plant that I use do to hate because every time I was always being very weak in the stomach and every time I complained about any stomach, anything, my mother would go and get it, I used to hate it with a passion, because it's really bad it tasted just like, oh god it's bad, so my mother would go to the garden and go and do it and make me drink it so I used to hate that plant and now I'm growing it which is how much I have changed, it is good, it is a type of plant that for any kind of stomach ailment is very good but you have to mix it with 'rue' which is bad enough in itself and then instead of seasoning with sugar you put salt, which makes it taste much worse, like drinking a very bad soup, it will kill you, it really did the work, it will kill you but it would take care of your stomach it will just bring it back, I don't why but it would bring back that level,

especially to prevent dehydration, that's my very sad memory from childhood, that plant there and the same thing with 'rosemary' (romero) it's a very good plant it's a very good astringent, very good for the hair, for people that are losing their hair, they say I haven't tried it…(laughter)…it's a very good astringent, you can use it for sores, for rashes, you can boil it and then use that water to clean the affected area or if you have a body rash to bathe with it, its very good, it will also help you to loosen up the scabs of the wounds, it can drop out of the skin without to much damage, after that, that is when Aloe Vera comes in to even up the color of the skin to make the sign disappear, so it's a powerful plant…

MJ: My experience with 'rosemary', I had some I was growing and I pulled the leaves off the stem and all these stems that I had dried and its very dark heavy oil as you know…

S12: And sticky

MJ: …But by the next day hair ?? out and then reaction to the oil

S12: Probably yeah, it's a very strong oil, that's why you don't just boil it just like that, people say that…well, you can use it to cook but only a little bit, you cant use a lot of it, because is problematic…

MJ: Because it's so strong

S12: You know I'm not surprised, but you know probably that's the astringent ability, to go under the dead of skin and forcing it out, who knows, but it's used to…you boil it and let it run and take it's course, ?? I realized that it was like a vine type of rosemary because I'm used to this one which is the bush type, but I'd never seen until I came here the one that hangs down for decoration purposes, I wasn't aware of it, all the time I knew that one

MJ: Yeah, that's the one I know

S12: Now there is for example that you see there that is just hanging, see how it hangs down?

MJ: Yeah

S12: I wasn't sure, it smells the same, it's just it's like a vine and it's very decorative it is seating in buildings in boxes, from second stories, office spaces…so…um…these ?? definitely is very good for inflammations, but it is also being used for people that are doing chemo, for cancer, as a tea, after chemo people will drink, this is one of the things you drink as common water, you drink as much of it as you can and it's very easy to find even in this type of weather, let me show you, the first time you came over here I told you that there were not that many and that they were hard to get right?

MJ: Yeah

S12: Now look at this, look, it's a weed…it grows all over the place…see

MJ: And how does it assist after chemotherapy?

S12: Well, people take it and they will feel less tired and it help to recover faster from the chemo and at the same time, for some reason, it help the body to recover from the cancer condition, the people I've seen that had cancer that I had to told them to drink 'Janten' (sp.??) they feel much better, they feel it aided their recovery and you know, that's basically what people use it for, and for inflammations, probably because chemo is so devastating that it will help to end this inflammation that brings out after people get chemo, they just get swollen stuff like that, so it's a very powerful plant and it's so abundant that it's year round, this will disappear in a little while because I'm going to cut them but then they will show up again…anywhere, UCLA, you go to any…all over the place, you can get it there, so you don't have to get any specialist to do it, once you know the plant you can go and ?? it's invasive it's a weed, people just hate it for that, but it's very useful…I'm going down the list of the plants that I know from this list, the ones I don't know I'm not commenting because I'm not familiar with them, "Alta Misa" or "Santa Maria" yeah, we use both names also. 'Alta Misa' is a very fragrant bush and it's used for… the leaves are used for stomachaches, and they are used also for diarrhea, in tea, you take it as a tea, also it has ritual purposes ?? says it's for good luck and he also use it to cleanse houses and people

MJ: How do you use it that way?

S12: You just cut the branch and you kind of just sweep the body with it, and the plant and the plant dispels any type of negativity around the person, many of these plants will double as medicine and as ritual elements

MJ: what is the property that is in it, that would make be used for spiritual cleansing?

S12: In spiritual things you go by two type of plants, by strong and sweet. Strong plants are the likes of the; Rue, Rosemary, Alta Misa, very strong pungent aromas, resilience also, if you are going to use it for cleansing, these plants tend to grow where nothing else can grow that easy, so that makes them very strong plants, they can with stand anything you throw at them, you can park on top of them every day and the next day they just sprout new leaves, they are just impossible to kill, so that makes them strong.

You have then Sweet herbs on the level of; Basil, Mint, Geraniums (sp.??), that type of plant, once you divide them into strong and sweet, according what you want to achieve is what you mix them with, you can add perfumes or other elements to make them even stronger or sweeter, it depends what you want to do, so for example, you can take a bath or a cleansing and we say to do it with a sweet, so you know you are looking for those plants that are on the same level as; basil, mint, spearmint, this type of very gentle plant or you can do a combination of them, you can do a combination of sweet and strong, just get a balance of, one plant balancing another, one suffering the other and one strengthening the other, that type of balancing act and then you use it.

And actually there is a very good combination that made it into the pop charts, Parsley, ?? and thyme, well there you have a very good combination of sweet and strong herbs, you know, and you can boil them, you can bathe with them, you can cleans your house, that's the perfect combination of strong and sweet herbs and it made it to the Top 40's, not bad. And it's a very old combination, that's one everyone uses, everyone knows that, then you

have the edibles, you can just eat them, so bake inside and out with them, so you can do that or you can do a sweet bath, with sweet herbs and then add perfumes and other aromas with them, or do the combination that I really favor that I really like that, I usually like to start the person with a strong herb bath, a dispelling bath and then bring it back into balance with sweet bath, sweet herb bath, and that it will be dispelling and then the sweet bath would be compelling, it would bring good things, both of them.

MJ: These baths are taken immediately one after another?

S12: It can be taken all alternatively, one and one, it depends on what is it you want to do, Brenda is very good at making bath salt with this herb, she dries them, she grinds them, and then she mixes with salt and then put them in pouches that you can add to your bath water, so that way clients don't have the willingness or the know-how, or the ability to…or they don't want to be seen boiling herbs, you got everything, so then that's the time they will come in and quit…the same bath but based on salt and then you dump it in your bath tub and that's the end of it, you have to take more then, because it can be used, so you have all these ways and you can add perfumes, oils, also soap, usually castile soap which is a very pure soap, or else you can take the castile soap and straighten it and make it stronger by adding these herbs, so you can do many things, we do soaps here, we have the luxury of having the fresh plants so I just have to go around the garden, pick a ?? and dilute the soap, melt it and reshape it and that's it, so every thing can be done

MJ: What oils are most often used?

S12: Usually the oils from the same plants, you can use whole clove, you can use cinnamon, it depends on…plant extract, usually the essential oils, but you know they are very expensive and when you have the availability of a garden you don't even have to use that many oils, it gets a particularly strong winter and my plants are not doing that well and I don't want to touch them because I might lose them, then I will go that way, it's easier and then, "Campana" (bell) we spoke about last time you came over here, that is the Angel Trumpet, the one that has some kind of hallucinogenic type of virtues, "Yerba Mora" is a very common plant, I find it all over the place, in here, in the Caribbean and South America, it's all over and it's known as "Yerba Mora" and it's very good also for the nerves, it's good also for headaches, that's another use that you might need to know, sometimes you don't boil or steep or infuse the herb, you macerate it a little bit and then you apply the leaf as is, like a poultice and that is done a lot with the cactus, you know the cactus? The "Nopal", it's known here as the "Nopal"? My mother used to use it and I use it too, you take the leaf of the Nopal and you split it and then you heat it, enough as much as the person can take it, for inflammations and you apply it to the area and it will drive out inflammation, it will dissolve inflammation and it will dissolve any type of blood clot that are formed to do an accident…something, and then you can apply it, that's a very common use, I only knew the cactus was good for that, I just knew that it was edible when I came here, that's when I realized you could have Nopal salad, because all my life I knew it as a very good remedy for pains and aches and inflammations and internal inflammations, whatever, and you can add to that heated part, you can grind Camphor and then apply it to the affected area and the Camphor will do is just open the pores, it will just suck out that…it will just bring it up, that's what my mother used to say, it would bring it up so you can see it

MJ: Camphor is applied to…

S12: You can apply it to the leaf, to the Nopal

MJ: Oh, ?????

S12: You can apply it on it's own or with Camphor

MJ: OK…so when you say it's used for nerves, what do you mean? Do you mean nervous nerves, restless nerves or…

S12: No, we were talking about Yerba Mora

MJ: Right, I'm sorry.

S12: I'm just giving you an example of…on certain leaves that you can use not neither boiled or steeped, but you just use them on their own, you kind of wilt them a little bit to bring the oil out, let me show you because there is one that…let's step right here….This is very good for earaches, but it's the oil, so you don't boil it, you have to extract the oil…you can do it like that, see…until this part, it's oily, is extracted and that oil is the one that you put in the ear canal, you have to do it over a stove, fire ?? drop in, drop in, and big bush to obtain enough of that, I just did it…usually you stay on the stove like this and you start catching the drops and those drops heated is what you put while they are still warm, that's to sooth earaches, and that's it and you know people, when I was growing up there was not the luxury of eardrops, well we had but it was to expensive, so everyone grew this and that was our ear treatment and it worked…lets see, "angel trumpet" is the same thing, "Siempre Viva" (always alive), "Yerba Bruja" (witch herb), this is the one that we are talking about, again disinflammatory agreed, it's used for earaches and again this leaf it can be heated, because it's a succulent and you can apply it and then as it's heated you cover it with a cloth and you keep it there and it will take care of inflammations and "Savila" aloe vera, again I did not know that there was a female or male aloe vera, I just knew aloe vera, but aloe vera is…well it's actually is good to say what it's not good for than to say what it is good for because you can use it for almost anything, it's a very, very useful plant for almost any kind of use, its good for problems of the stomach especially for ulcers, because of this ability that the crystal part has to coat he stomach and that allows the irritated stomach and ulcers to heal because it wont allow the stomach juices to keep acerbating, because of that you use it for burns and scars because it tends to make it disappear and even out the skin color, so there are so many things you can do to, with aloe vera, I mean you can use it, it has beauty value, for facial masks and facial treatment and I mean there is so much stuff that you could be here talking about aloe vera all day, it's a very good plant, I mean…I remember people used to say that it will never do you any wrong to have aloe vera every day because there is nothing wrong that can come from it, you can have it, eat it, in juice or whatever and will not harm you, on the contrary, so there is nothing wrong, that's the plant that I haven't heard anything bad about, there are some plants that you have to be very careful, you can not take it and come out, you can not take it and have certain foods, with aloe vera you don't have none of that you can just take anything. "Rompe Saraguey" from the Caribbean, again interesting, people use for cleansings again and baths,

MJ: So that's a strong plant?

S12: It's a strong plant, yes

MJ: Do you grow it?

S12: yes, I used to have both varieties, but it's back there, we can go there and I can show it to you, I used to grow both the black and the white "Rompe Saraguey" but my white one died

MJ: So it's used only spiritually?

S12: Yeah, the only use I know is of a spiritual cleansing element, "Campana"or angel trumpet we know that, "Paraiso" (paradise) also that's from Cuba from the Caribbean, "Paraiso" in Cuba or "Alelailo" in Puerto Rico, ALELAILO, the one with the yellow seeds hanging from it, it looks like a Christmas tree, that's it

MJ: ???

S12: Yeah, you can ???, it has an orchid like flower, very, very tiny and it grows in clusters, it's a very nice aroma, but you really have to stick your nose into it, that's the "Paraiso" (paradise), OK, Lemon-Grass or Canya Santa in Cuba, Limoncillo in Puerto Rico, very, very good it's a very good plant for a throat ache, tonsillitis or whatever it's called

MJ: Lymph gland

S12: No, I'll look for it, but its very good for that, usually they get operated on when they are young

MJ: Oh, tonsils

S12: Yes.

MJ: Tonsillitis

S12: Yeah, so it's very good in tea, it's like drinking lemon juice, that's why it's called Limoncillo…the whole herb…you cut it and just aroma smells very lemon like, it's very good and it's used for tonsillitis, problems of the throat and usually by extension, when those problems extend to the ears, so you drink it as a tea

MJ: And he had said it was good for digestive ailments, including in dogs, do you know anything about this?

S12: No, not at all…the "Guayava" that's the Guava, very good for diarrhea, it has the ability to constipate people so it's obvious that it can constipate you, if people have diarrhea they drink teas of Guava and it will help with the diarrhea, it's very common in the Caribbean, in here you have to plant it and try to…I have a couple of trees here and they are both in bloom and the tender leaves as well are very good. "Hibiscus" it's called

"Mar Pacifico" in Cuba or Pacific Ocean. MAR and Pacific with an O, an accent over the 'a' in Pacific. For cleansings and the leaves says it all, to bring peace, to pacify, in the ?? tradition…align with the ancestors, you know?

MJ: So is that considered a ??

S12: This is ??

MJ: oh

S12: The "Yucca" I don't know which one he is talking about, I don't know if he's talking about the "Casaba" (Sp.??) or a tea that is called also 'yucca', I would have to see the plant. "Mexican Salvia" yes, both, any kind of 'salvia' (sage) and I grow both, the Caribbean sage and the Mexican, they are very good for bronchial asthma, very good, it's also good for cervical pains, colds, it's a very hot plant, very powerful plant…

MJ: It's a hot plant, that's the same as a strong plant?

S12: No, it's a hot, it means that it creates it's own heat and that's the type of plant that when you use it you can not come out in the open, because remember I told you that you go down there you get muscular spasm? So when you use it you have to remained very well covered and…very problematic.

MJ: Are there other of these plants that we've been through today that are hot?

S12: No, 'Salvia' is a strong plant but it's also hot and you have to really be careful how you use it, I don't like to mix with anything, I use it on it's own, you either use it on it's own…because it has the ability of being both, being strong but also being hot plant and sometimes it's problematic and ?? want to heat them up….you know?

MJ: Are any of these plants considered cold, that we have talked about so far?

S12: No, none of the ones I've seen, 'Fern' yes, it's a plant associated with the ?? tradition with Oshun…'Apple' I don't know. 'Coffee' very good, the leaves are good for inflammations and used to relax muscles, it forces the muscle to kind of spasm by (sub-doing??) relaxing and you know when you have muscles that are really strange, the problem is that unless you have a tree like I do, you cant use it because there are no coffee trees around here, it's very good. "Salvia nativa de California" that's the native sage. "Olive Tree" I don't know, "Llanten" (sp.??) we spoke about it. "Mint" for stomach aches and also to sooth nerves, you know to upset, to…to…for restful sleep, because some people can sleep but they don't rest, so sometimes it's not only insomnia but its also the people that the person can sleep and they sleep all night but they don't sleep, they are very restless, so usually they can with warm milk, very rare when there is a sleep disorder do you take it on it's own, for that type of problem I like to give milk, warm milk, "Fresh Mil" (sp.??) I don't know what it is, "Ajenjo" (wormwood) I know what is it, it's a bitter herb and for uses of the liver but I would have to see what plants Hermano Carlos is talking about, Ajenjo I know, which I don't have in my garden to begin with but I know it, it's very bitter it has the bitterness of vinegar, it's bitter. "Pinol" (sp.??) don't know, "Zapote" (sapote), "Gardenia" we have right here…

MJ: Oh, right there

S12: The flower, very aromatic, for bath and then I have the "Arnica" (wolf's bane) which is an excellent thing for bruises, blood clots, aches, body aches due to accidents, all that type of problems that arise from accidents, it dissolves blood clots, especially internal bruises, very powerful, very good

MJ: How do you prepare it and apply it?

S12: Well you can go from the inside-out, from the outside-in, right now in California we are lucky that we have ointments and all kinds of preparations, when I was in Puerto Rico, we used it in poultices and anasteeve (sp.??), we use the leaf, yes

MJ: When you make a poultice do you macerate the leaf? Do you apply the leaf just like they are? Do you boil the leaf?

S12: You can do all, like I told you, you can apply the leaf by itself, you can macerate it with certain things, to help release the elements of the leaf, usually when I macerate I use camphor and then you add the grind camphor with the leaf, because that helps the skin to absorb better

MJ: And in macerating, using camphor, how do you that?

S12: Usually use the pestle and mortar, grind them a little bit, bruise it a little bit, and then after the leaves have been bruised and some of the oils are out, then I use the pestle and let it rest there for a while and then apply the pulp, it can be hot or cold depending on what you want to achieve

MJ: And when you say apply, use camphor…

S12: You make like a paste

MJ: What ?? do you mean?

S12: the solid camphor, the tablet, you make like a paste and that's what you apply, you cover it with clean cloth or with leaves or whatever is that is the poultice you want to do, you can do that or you can take that juice mix it with oil and make an ointment and then it's that (qualifield?) what you add to the oil, usually mineral oil which is the best one, if not then olive and use it as an ointment and then cover it and let it sweat, let the body sweat the oil out, so that's usually what you do

MJ: I've seen one preparation that was with alcohol

S12: Alcohol

MJ: It works?

S12: yeah it works, I usually, if I need to add alcohol, I add rum, they cut so much down, distillation, I might as well use it, yeah, the alcohol what it does it helps, it frees those

elements from the leaves, so people use alcohol to make drops or in the Caribbean we have rum all over the place so why waste it, and alcohol used to be very expensive, remember that, you had to go to a pharmacy or drug store, but rum was readily available and it did the same work the same job so might as well use rum, I'm still using rum…(laughter)

MJ: What about preparations of that…that are commercially available, 'arnica' (wolf's-bane), in a balm or a ?? you think that would be very effective?

S12: Well that might be very effective because it would save you from going through the process of doing it, you know what I mean, it's done, sometimes when I don't have the time to prepare it, I just go get it at the pharmacy, because first of all of finding the 'arnica' and going to the process is that you don't have that time, so it's easier in that sense to go and get it from the pharmacy and that's one thing you'll see in all these things, you know, contrary to popular belief, we are not at war with the industry, I think that it makes our lives easier, I know how to make poultices and how to make ointments and balms but if it's already done why bother?, so I just go get it, it's got to be that I have to add something that is not there, then I'll do it, when you have to add that extra something, or subject the preparation to a ritual then I will do it, because then you know what you put in there

MJ: I wonder also, the way you prepare it would be more potent than the ?? version

S12: Absolutely because like mother used to say, you don't know who prepared that, when you prepare this kind of stuff you have to be in a mental state, you usually do it in the temple or in front of a sacred object so, the whole process into a ritual, sometimes it get blessed or "Ensalmado" as we say in Spanish, which means that it stays there, which means that it stays there in front of the sacred object to be infused with that power so when it comes out you not only have that but you have other extra things that you don't get with a commercially prepared one, so that takes a lot of time in, for example, in the case of "Arnica" (wolf's-bane) you have an accident that will occur today and you don't have three days to make that preparation, so you say start with this one I'll prepare this, because you know you don't want internal…any…especially accidents and stuff like that, internal bleeding is there, you want to start moving as soon as you can and that is what Arnica does, so when people come here, already after the fact then we can take the advantage of preparing the balm

MJ: well we only have a minute left so I guess we can end it here and talk about some more things at another time

S12: It's alright with me, on Monday, do I have class Monday? Well what we can do is…on Monday s I'm at UCLA and we can sit down and take a look at what we can do there and then take it to… and if we need the garden then we can do that, because….

TAPE ENDS